

Santa Rosa County District 5 Newsletter

A Message From Your Commissioner



**District 5
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What a year we have had in Santa Rosa County! For many of us, the summer was consumed with the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. I now know more about oil and its potential effects on the environment than I ever imagined. And, while the long term consequences to our environment and our economy are still being evaluated, we have come through the event largely unscathed. While 2010 will undoubtedly be remembered by many as the year of the spill, we are already beginning to put it behind us, looking forward to what is in store for our county.

The fall festival season is in full force right now. If you have not had a chance to visit the many different stops on the Beaches to Woodlands tour, I encourage you to get out and see what Santa Rosa has to offer. Traversing our county from north to south will give you an appreciation for the diversity that sets Santa Rosa apart from so many other areas.

In District 5, we are happy to welcome Avalex to the former site of Gulf Breeze Ford. In these tough economic times, the quality of life and available workforce Santa Rosa County offers continues to attract businesses from near and far. While the economy nationally is still struggling, there are at least signs of life that things are picking up on a regional basis. Your county is committed to fostering the growth and development of our economy and job opportunities for our residents.

I thank you for the opportunity to serve the people of Santa Rosa County. These past two years on the board of county commissioners have given me a new appreciation for our county, and the people I serve.

**Lane Lynchard
District 5 Commissioner &
Commission Vice-Chair**



Halloween

Santa Rosa County urges residents to be especially alert on October 30 and 31 when children may be out trick-or-treating for Halloween. In addition to children walking on the roads, medians and curbs, motorists should be on the watch for children darting out from parked cars and those wearing dark costumes at night.

County offices are receiving many calls inquiring what date to take children trick-or-treating. In the unincorporated areas of Santa Rosa County and the City of Gulf Breeze, no resolutions recommending an alternate date are in place. However, the City of Milton is recommending Saturday, October 30 for trick-or-treating for residents within their city limits.

Community fall festivals and parties held throughout the local area are a safe and fun alternative for children to enjoy Halloween. For those who choose to trick-or-treat in their neighborhood, please be sure to do so safely:

- Be cautious of animals and strangers
- Visit homes that have the porch light on
- Wear light-colored or reflective clothing
- Make sure masks don't limit your ability to see clearly
- Carry a flashlight
- Cross the street only at corners
- Do not eat candy if the package is already opened, and remember, small, hard candy can be a choking hazard for young children



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Crane Cove/Whisper Bay Project Nears Completion

The Crane Cove/Whisper Bay safety improvement project for U.S. Highway 98 began in March and is scheduled to be completed this month. You may have noticed that the Florida Department of Transportation Traffic Engineers fully activated the signal on Monday, October 18.

The project involved the construction of a new roadway around the old Delchamps shopping center that will align Crane Cove Boulevard with Whisper Bay Boulevard and the installation of a traffic signal at this new intersection. Improvements also include converting the two existing full access median openings at Crane Cove Boulevard and between Crane Cove Boulevard and Whisper Bay Boulevard to directional median openings allowing for left turns and U-turns only. Turn lanes will be modified and lengthened as necessary to accommodate these improvements.

The improvements were identified in the U.S. 98 Corridor Management Study prepared by HDR Engineering in 2001. The existing Crane Cove Boulevard intersection is located on a curve with visibility problems and is very dangerous, with one traffic fatality at the intersection. Implementation of these improvements will make this segment of U.S. 98 much safer. The cost for this project is around \$900 thousand and is funded by the Florida Department of Transportation through a Joint Participation Agreement.



U.S. Highway 98 Median Safety Improvement Projects in the Works

Redfish Point / Tiger Point West/ Oakhill Road

Program: Florida Department of Transportation Joint Participation Agreement

Project Description: Add a west bound left turn lane at Redfish Point Road. Add an east bound left turn lane and extend west bound left turn lane at Tiger Point West Boulevard. Close the median at Oakhill Road and the Boaters World shopping center.

Status: Construction begins this month; anticipated completion December 2010

Contract Amount: \$108,105.00

Woodlawn Beach / East Bay Blvd. / Oak St.

Program: Florida Department of Transportation Joint Participation Agreement

Project Description: Add a west bound left turn lane at East Bay Boulevard. Add an east bound left turn lane at Woodlawn Beach Road. Convert the median to directional, extend the west bound left turn lane, and add an east bound left turn lane at the entrance to Midway Baptist Church. Add an east bound left turn lane at Oak Street.

Status: Construction begins this month; anticipated completion December 2010

Contract Amount: \$306,689.00

Elks Way

Program: Florida Department of Transportation County Incentive Grant Program

Project Description: This project includes the overlay and striping of the existing right turn lane on Hwy. 98 onto Elks Way. A new 4-foot paved shoulder will be constructed along the edge of the turn lane along with a 35 foot radius to Elks Way.

Status: Under Design

Estimated Cost: \$50,000

Transportation Improvements Underway

August has been a landmark month for road improvements in Santa Rosa County. On August 3, the Florida Department of Transportation announced an award of \$14.9 million to construct four lanes of State Road 87 South through Holley, up to the southern Eglin AFB boundary. On August 11, FDOT announced it had identified \$9.4 million for construction of the last four-lane segment of Avalon Boulevard to complete the entire project from I-10 to US 90. The announcements capped off years of work by the Board of County Commissioners and staff, working at local, regional, state, and federal levels to move the projects along in the plans and position them for funding. At the time of the Avalon Boulevard announcement, Planning and Zoning staff was preparing an application for a highly competitive grant to finish the last segment. All the years of hard work paid off, and within a few years, we will all enjoy a safer and less congested ride with more miles of sidewalks and bike lanes.



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Economic Development Update

One of Santa Rosa County's largest economic successes of this quarter is the recent decision of Avalex Technologies to stay in our region. All of Santa Rosa County benefits from this endeavor and the spoils reach into Escambia and Okaloosa Counties as well. Now that Avalex Technologies has a new larger location in Gulf Breeze in the former World Ford building on Gulf Breeze Parkway, a number of multiplicative effects will be realized. The company will now have the ability to expand its operations, more people in our region will have opportunities to become employed in well-paying jobs and our local businesses will have more people spending money at their establishments.

Clearly, these are great benefits for today, but the project also represents strong economic development leads for the future. One of the long-ranging benefits of this undertaking is that Avalex has also purchased additional acreage around their new site with the intention of building a new tech-park that can house similar industries operating in the aerospace and defense arena.

With this, we now have growing business, more high paying jobs in Santa Rosa County and a future location to put other similar industries looking to cluster with like-minded companies. The Santa Rosa County Commission works closely with TEAM Santa Rosa to facilitate the creation of jobs and to strengthen our economic status as a community. When new jobs are created, those jobs create more business for existing business.

This is a critical chain of events because business expansion is economically beneficial not only for the city in which the business locates, but for the entire area. Our local workforce is shared by the businesses that operate in Gulf Breeze, Navarre, Pensacola, Milton, Pace, Jay, and many other communities that are all part of the same Metropolitan Statistical Area. The developments that benefit Gulf Breeze, for instance with the Avalex project, are also good for Ft. Walton Beach, Pensacola and other surrounding communities. This is due to trickle-down economics. In short, higher salaries provide more income for people to inject into the economy. In turn, the more money we have circulating in the economy, the more commerce our local businesses will enjoy. These are all components of a growing economy that ultimately provides a better quality of life for Santa Rosa County.

Your county commission and TEAM Santa Rosa are continually working to bring more industry and new jobs to the area. We do this by working with industry to help get their needs met in their decision to locate to or expand in Santa Rosa County.

Numbers Show New Navarre Beach Pier a Hit with Locals, Tourists

Since its opening on June 5, the new Navarre Beach Pier has been a popular stop on Navarre Beach. In the first three months, gate revenues totaled \$118,026. And the pier is not just for those who are fishing, approximately 75 percent of pier patrons each month are walkers!

Month	Number of Patrons	Gate Collections
June	14,598	\$45,296
July	18,169	\$45,873
August	10,059	\$26,857

Deepwater Horizon Incident Update

Santa Rosa County was very fortunate that we did not experience the amount of oil product on our beaches as our neighboring counties and states. Today, that minimal impact has been reduced drastically with only occasional small tar balls or oiled debris being found, generally on the west end of the beach. A majority of the tar balls being discovered are thought to be from previous impacts, now being uncovered on days of high surf.

While the response to the incident is not as intense as during the summer, Santa Rosa County staff along with BP, U.S. Coast Guard, Florida Department of Environmental protection, BP contractors and are continuing to participate in division and branch command activities including daily monitoring, reporting and immediately addressing clean up needs as they arise in our county. Additionally, BP continues to monitor Pensacola Pass area and is cleaning oil off Barrancas Beach daily.

BP is evaluating several options, including divers to remove/clean submerged oil from the bay floor in Escambia. Luckily, there have been no confirmed reports of submerged oil in Santa Rosa County waters. Santa Rosa County has requested an assessment of our beach renourishment borrow site, to ensure the sand was not impacted.

For more information:

Spill Information from the U.S. Government:
www.restorethegulf.gov

Florida DEP Deepwater Horizon Response:
www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/

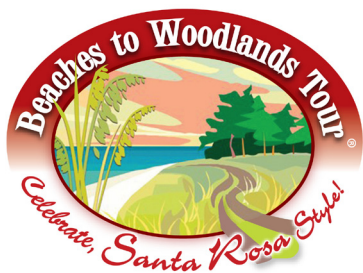
Claim Information:
www.gulfcoastclaimsfacility.com/

Re-employment Services:
www.workforceescarosa.com/

UWF Independent Water Sampling Data:
uwf.edu/cedb/Oil%20Spill.cfm



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Events this weekend:

Oct. 22-23

Ghosts of Milton Walking Tours – 6 p.m. Polka Dots, 5227 Willing St., Milton, Fla. Details: Angela Nolan 850-529-1016 or www.santarosahistoricalsociety.com.

Oct. 22-23 and 29-30

Downtown Milton Haunted House Spooky fun and a popular event sponsored by Main Street Milton. Event will be held on Willing Street in Downtown Milton. 6 p.m. Oct. 22-23 and 29-30. Details: Josh Wilkes, 850-626-6246 or www.mainstreetmilton.org.

Oct. 22-24

The Santa Rosa Horse Assistance Council Weekend of Trail Riding, Camping and Concerts, Coldwater Recreation Area, Milton. Cost is \$20 donation per person and includes breakfast Saturday and live music Friday night with the band "Trilogy" and Saturday night "Touch of Blue." Details: Kim Gallagher 850-380-2278 or Russell Bloodworth 334-657-8889.

Oct. 22-23, & 29-31

Boo at the Zoo at Gulf Breeze Zoo - 5701 Gulf Breeze Pkwy., Gulf Breeze. Friday and Saturday events will feature a bit of a "scare" with haunted train rides, side shows and other treats. Sunday afternoon Halloween event is geared toward smaller children and will feature a trick-or-treat path. Oct. 22 & 23 6 p.m. – 10 p.m. Oct. 29-30 open 6 p.m. – 10 p.m.; and 2 p.m. – 6 p.m. Oct. 31 Details: Kayte Wanko 850-932-2229 or www.gulfbreezozoo.org.

Oct. 22

Santa Rosa County Library Foundation Fall Golf Tournament - Hidden Creek Golf Course, 3070 PGA Blvd., Navarre.

Ghosts, Triathletes, Horses & Bulls Highlight Week Four of the Beaches to Woodland Tour

Fee to play is \$75. Oct. 22, 11:30 a.m. Details: Linda Hendrix, 850-623-2043 or www.santarosa.fl.gov/libraries.

Oct. 23

4th Annual Blue Jeans and BBQ Festival and Bull Riding Competition sponsored by Covenant Hospice – 4 p.m. – 9 p.m. at Hayes Ranch, 5097 Berryhill Road, Milton. Event features Kiddie Korral, food, entertainment and a bull riding competition, Bucking Series Rodeo. Festival tickets \$10 in advance or \$15 at the door. Details: Leah Harrison at 850-208-7122 or <http://support.covenanthospice.org/bluejeans/index.html>

Oct. 23

3rd Annual Mediacom Garcon Point Bridge Run/Walk - 7:30 a.m. start at Lowe's/Walmart 1421 Tiger Park Lane, Gulf Breeze, Fla. 4.8 mile run across Garcon Point Bridge and Pensacola Bay. Advance registration: Adults over 18, \$25; Youth Under 18, \$20. All after Oct. 22, \$30. Details: 850-983-5043 or <http://www.santarosa.k12.fl.us/sref/index.htm>.

Oct. 23

2nd Annual Taste of Navarre at 2 p.m. sponsored by the Navarre Chamber of Commerce - Navarre Park, 8513 Navarre Pkwy, Foot of the Navarre Beach Bridge. From sushi and fine cheese assortments, to jambalaya and wings, this is your chance to attend a catered event (under an open-air tent) on the waterfront in Navarre Park. Details: Betsy Soles 850-939-3267 or www.navarrechamber.com.

Oct. 24

Ghost Chase Triathlon and Duathlon - Navarre Beach Boat Ramp, Navarre at 8 a.m. Entry level multi-sport event gives family and individuals a chance to compete. Super Sprint Triathlon includes a 300-yard swim, 9-mile bike ride and 2-mile run. Intermediate Distance Duathlon for youth up to age 12. Details: Steven Fair, 850-549-5454 or www.racepensacola.com.

Events all month:

Sweet Season Farms Corn Maze - 2260 Horn Road, Milton. Visitors can spend time navigating their way through our 5-acre corn maze, playing on the farm-themed playground, enjoying hayrides, cow train rides, firing our corn cannon or have a family picnic at designated areas on the farm. Through Oct. 31, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Saturdays and 1 p.m. – 5 p.m. Sundays. Details: Trent or Sharon Mathews 850-675-3573 or www.sweetseasonfarms.com.

Adventures Unlimited - 8974 Tomahawk Landing Road, Milton. **"Fabulous Fall Foliage"** Zip Line Tours exploring the geology, local eco-systems and history of northern Santa Rosa County. Details: 850.623.6197 or 800.239.6864 or www.adventuresunlimited.com.

Navarre Beach Pier - 8579 Gulf Blvd., Navarre Beach. Fall fishing frenzy. Kids under age 12 fish free for the month of October! Cost per day: Walkers - \$1; Fishing - \$7 adults, \$6 seniors or \$4 children under age 12 (but free in October.) Details: 850-936-1794 or www.navarrepier.com.

Holland Farms Tour - Homer Holland Road, Milton, Fla. Holland Farms offers hay rides, a pumpkin patch, and a hiking trail throughout October. Experience a real working farm! Details: BJ Holland, 850-675-6876 or www.hollandfarmsonline.com.

"Secrets of Santa Rosa Archeology & History in Your Own Backyard," - Arcadia Mill Archaeological Site, 5709 Mill Pond Lane, Milton. Historic lecture serie. Arcadia Mill is Florida's largest antebellum industrial complex. 11 a.m., Saturdays in October, Details: 850-626-3084 or <http://www.historicpensacola.org/arcadia.cfm>.

